

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Digital Artefacts

#### Iowa Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Digital Artefacts Brings New Software To Market

**Client Profile:**

Digital Artefacts, located in Iowa City, Iowa, develops and writes custom software applications for its client. Co-founders James Cremer, Ph.D. and Joan Severson employ eight people, all of whom had been student research assistants at the University of Iowa prior to joining the company.

**Situation:**

Digital Artefacts developed a program to remotely collect equipment monitoring data as part of a total productive maintenance (TPM) initiative. By collecting data on vibration, infrared scans, and noise, the software indicates the status of equipment while it is operating. The software compiles data from multiple sites into a central location and allows a company to schedule maintenance of equipment based on the gathered wear indicators. Digital Artefacts saw a greater potential to market its TPM software, and requested assistance from the Iowa Manufacturing Extension Partnership (IMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

**Solution:**

IMEP and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) worked together to find a marketing consultant to assist Digital Artefacts. The consultant helped to determine the marketability of the software and to define the steps necessary to bring the software to market.

The most pressing question facing Digital Artefacts was whether to market its software package to corporations for retrofitting, or to processing equipment manufacturers for inclusion on original equipment. The consultant educated the company on capitol requirements: if Digital Artefacts decided to pursue a marketing initiative, the damage done by under-funding could ruin the company. The consultant helped Digital Artefacts redirect its efforts to writing custom applications. With help from IMEP and SBDC, the company applied for and received SBA 8(a) status, currently the only company in Iowa with that designation. The company has also formed research collaborations with the University of Iowa, Rockwell Collins, and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Sales have doubled each year and the company has grown to eight employees.

**Results:**

Developed a distribution strategy that meets the unique needs of the company.

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Received SBA 8(a) designation.  
Established research partnerships.  
Improved company sales by 100 percent year-over-year.  
Created 6 new jobs.

### Testimonial:

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